



# Band Tales

Palomar Audubon Society  
A Chapter of the  
NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

Volume XXIV  
No. 5

March-April  
2010

Editor  
Arne Christiansen

## SOUTHEAST ARIZONA PAS TRIP SET FOR AUGUST

PAS is sponsoring a trip to SE Arizona from August 14-22. The trip covers all the major habitats and will be led by Melody Kehl, a professional guide from Tucson. The trip target birds include many birds not seen in our area and only seen in the SE Arizona region in the US. The trip is limited to 10 birders. Cost is \$700 (double occupancy) which includes hotel, van transportation, gas, insurance, permits and all meals except dinner. Guide tip extra. Single occupancy: additional \$300. The cost does not include airfare, as some of you may want to drive over or use miles to get free tickets to Tucson. Van transportation from Poway is included in the cost of the trip for those of you who wish to take advantage of that option

Here is an outline of the trip. Should be a blast!

Hal Benham

Email or call Hal or Dianne (858-679-7904) with questions. Happy birding!

Aug 14<sup>th</sup>: Fly or drive to Tucson. Pick up fliers who have pre-arranged flights to be on the same plane. Drive to Green Valley Country Inn. Dinner and evening birding in Madera Canyon.

Aug 15<sup>th</sup>: Bird Madera Canyon for hummers, trogons, warblers, black capped gnatcatcher, rufous-capped warbler, mythical Montezuma quail, etc. Night at Country Inn Green Valley

Aug 16<sup>th</sup>: Patagonia for flycatchers, Paton's, San Rafael Valley for sparrows. Night at Sierra Vista Country Inn

Aug 17<sup>th</sup>: Huachucas for hummers, buff-breasted flycatcher, trogons. Night in Sierra Vista

Aug 18<sup>th</sup>: Slaughter Ranch, Whitewater Draw. Night at Portal Peak Lodge

Aug 19<sup>th</sup>: Chiricahuas in AM for Mexican chickadee, etc. Drive to Tucson PM

Aug 20<sup>th</sup>: Catalina's for warblers

Aug 21<sup>st</sup>: Sweetwater in AM, possibly Catalina State Park. PM and evening in California Gulch seeking 5-striped sparrow, owls, nightjars. Late night.

Aug 22<sup>nd</sup>: Depart

Please complete the application in this issue (p.6) and mail to Hal Benham, 15946 Cumberland Dr., Poway, CA 92064. Slots for the trip will be filled on a first come first served basis with a waiting list if necessary. Please return your check for the full amount made out to Palomar Audubon Society with the application. If Palomar cancels the trip, all money will be refunded.



## ANNUAL PAS PICNIC BASH ADVANCE NOTICE

The PAS picnic will be on the 13th of June. Location and time are still to be determined. Please keep this date open because you won't want to miss it.



### Inside this Band Tales

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*Field Trips*..... pages 4,5  
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## A BIRD'S EYE VIEW

*Doug Nail*

First, I want to thank all the folks who turned out for the Escondido Christmas Bird Count. We had a nice day to bird and the results surely proved it. All groups reported in with a great number of bird species seen. Penny, Sunny and Arne did a great job of getting us all fed. Ken Weaver, as usual, was instrumental in pulling together all the bird reports. For those of you who didn't get a chance to participate there is always next year...remember that everyone is welcome...this is not just for experienced birders! Many of us started birding on CBCs around the country.



As many of you know, Palomar Audubon has started a new birding experience for our members. Hal and Dianne Benham have graciously volunteered their time and energy to put together a couple of great bird watching trips for 2010. One, which is coming up in April, is our Panama bird trip to Canopy Lodge and Canopy Towers. We are all ready to go. I'll tell you all about it when we return.

Our next trip is coming up in August and there is a registration form in this issue of Band Tales. If you are interested in going please get your registration form in and let Dianne and Hal Benham know you are interested. There is room for just 10 people...so don't wait!

We've had some great birding experiences over the last two months just birding locally. Jim Beckman led a great trip to Lake Norconian and had one of the best days there in a number of years. Our Dos Picos/ Rangeland Road trip was also quite good with 67 species and some stand out birds like Golden Crowned Sparrow, Pink-sided Junco, Mountain Bluebirds and Ferruginous Hawks. Jim, as always, has put together some great locations timed to get some really good birds....thanks Jimmy!

Also, don't forget all those overwintering birds that are still around like; Red-breasted and Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers at Guajome Park; Vermillion Flycatcher, female Black and White Warbler, Orchard, Hooded and Bullock's Orioles at Nestor Park and the Hepatic Tanager at Tijuana Slough...not bad for it being winter here in San Diego County!?

By the time you get this newsletter we will have had our Gull Course with Paul Lehman so I'll tell you all about it next newsletter. We are planning on having several of these courses each year on bird groups like sparrows and shorebirds to help our members improve their birding skills.

Don't forget the San Diego Bird Festival. This is a great

opportunity to look and compare new optics, take a few courses, take a few local trips with folks from all over the country and just have a nice time. I strongly recommend it if you haven't been to one before and even if you have there are always new courses, new equipment and new trips.

I hope to see each of you during the next two months on a walk or at a meeting or maybe at the San Diego Bird Festival.

Good birding!

## ENTICING THE 'BLUEBIRD OF HAPPINESS' TO YOUR GARDEN

By Carol Killebrew



Western Bluebird, *Sialia mexicana*  
Photo by Carol Killebrew

For the past four years, my husband and I have watched Western Bluebirds raise families in a nestbox we put up near our kitchen window. Observing the wing waves and listening to the vocalizations of the male during courtship is great fun as is the nest-building by the female. We find it fascinating to monitor the box and track the hatchlings as they're growing. The show never ends from April to August, as the parents bring food all day long for their first and second broods. Later we enjoy watching the fledglings and their parents frolic in the birdbath and forage for insects and berries.

The Western Bluebird is common in pine and oak woodland in the inland valleys, foothills, and mountains of San Diego County. Recently the species has turned an evolutionary corner and is becoming an urban adapter in our area. The San Diego Natural History Museum first noticed this as it began field work for the San Diego County Bird Atlas in 1997, and the trend has accelerated ever since. The birds are apparently following in the wake of Nuttall's Woodpecker, an earlier urban adapter that took advantage of the extensive planting of trees over what was once treeless sage scrub.

Western Bluebirds are fascinating, lovely songbirds. To attract them you will need to put up and monitor a nestbox specifically designed for Western Bluebirds in the appropriate location. You may also need to supply water and protect the birds from pests. More information can be found on the Bluebirds of San Diego County website at: <http://members.cox.net/bluebirds/>

## PROJECT PUFFIN

The National Audubon Society is offering 4 adult ornithology sessions and one teen birding session at legendary Hog Island this coming summer (visit <http://www.projectpuffin.org/OrnithCamps.html>). Dr. Steve Kress, Audubon's VP for Bird Conservation, will direct the sessions. He will be joined by some of the country's top ornithologists and teachers including Kenn Kaufman, Pete Dunne, and Scott Weidensaul. The program will also feature activities for children to learn about birds from noted children's author Lynne Cherry.

Additionally, said Dr. Kress, there will be two service-learning sessions offered in association with Exploritas (formerly Elder Hostel). During the June session (5/30 - 6/4/2010) participants will assist Project Puffin biologists in counting gulls, eiders and cormorants at several nearby seabird nesting islands. Read more about/sign up for the June session at <http://www.exploritas.org/programs/programdetail.asp?RowId=1%2D4UBJHH>. Participants in the September session (9/12 - 9/17/2010) will learn about land and seabirds through bird banding and presentations and assist with a habitat management project for endangered terns and storm-petrels at Eastern Egg Rock. They will also assist a Saw Whet Owl banding project. Read more about/sign up for the September session at <http://www.exploritas.org/programs/programdetail.asp?DId=1%2D5453Y5>.

Known to thousands as the Audubon Camp in Maine, Hog Island was closed during the summer of 2009 to permit planning for the future. This process led to Project Puffin bringing back the popular ornithology programs for adults and teens. The adult programs are for both beginning and avid birders who would like to learn more about Maine birdlife and the biology of birds. The teen session is for 14-17 year olds with a keen interest in birds. (This session is co-sponsored by the American Birding Association.) Due to its varied habitats, Hog Island and vicinity are an ideal setting for the program, as more than 300 species frequent the area.

Participants live in authentic, turn of the century housing on the 330 acre spruce-covered island. Here, they will enjoy three superb home-cooked meals by renowned chef Janii Laberge. The meals are served in an historic island farmhouse that overlooks Muscongus Bay. During the five-day sessions, small field groups will go on a variety of trips and boat cruises, and attend presentations on topics ranging from migration, and the identification of warblers, to the restoration of Atlantic Puffins and three species of terns on nearby Eastern Egg Rock. Participants will have the opportunity to learn about bird banding, sound recording, and bird photography from leaders in their fields.

The Hog Island camp first opened in 1936, with Roger Tory Peterson as its first bird instructor. It is well known

in America's environmental community as a distinguished and beautiful place of learning and enjoyment. The sessions are filling rapidly, so it's best to register soon. Chapters should consider reserving a place as a scholarship for an Audubon leader or community member. And please consider posting our one page flyer on your web site or include it your newsletter. Reservations are easier than ever before with on-line registrations. To learn more about Hog Island ornithology programs, view a slide show, download the one page flyer and register, visit <http://www.projectpuffin.org/OrnithCamps.html>



### JOIN THE "E-COMMUNITY"

Palomar Audubon Society has had a friendly e-mail message list since October 2000. This list is focused specifically on the needs and interests of PAS members and is used to post important messages, including announcements, and last minute changes to events, trip reports, with an occasional comment, boast, or query from members. Unlike many e-mail lists, this has been a "low volume" list that averages only a few messages per week - so it doesn't fill up your mailbox.

**How to sign up:** This e-mail list is administered through Yahoo! Groups. There are essentially two ways for you to participate:

- **As an unregistered user.** In this case, all you get are the messages when they are sent. To join the email list this way send messages to: [Kemer.Thomson@gmail.com](mailto:Kemer.Thomson@gmail.com) with your name and e-mail address. You will receive a confirmation e-mail. Don't reply to that confirmation email or you will immediately be taken off the list. Quit the group at any time by sending a message from the receiving e-mail address to:

[PalomarBird-unsubscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:PalomarBird-unsubscribe@yahoogroups.com)

- **As a registered Yahoo! user.** If you have a Yahoo! mail account or belong to any other Yahoo! Groups as a registered user, this is the easiest and most powerful option: it allows you to read the archive of previous postings (seven year's worth) and to change your personal settings. To join the group this way, go to: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/PalomarBird/> and click on the "Join This Group!" button.

## FIELD TRIPS

*Jim Beckman*

Whether a seasoned birder or a beginner, you are welcome to join us. For more information call the trip leader shown below. Heavy rain cancels trips.

Locations in Thomas Guide Coordinates are shown in parenthesis as (Page-Column Row). Ratings: 1=easy, suitable for all levels, 2=moderate, a bit more walking and possibly some hilly terrain, 3=challenging, longer hikes and may involve some steep terrain.

Saturday, March 6

### San Diego Bird Festival – No Field Trip

Saturday, March 13, 8:30 a.m.

#### Doheny State Beach Park

Dana Point

**(Orange County 971-J7) Rating: 1**

Take I-5 north past San Clemente and exit west on the Beach Cities/PCH/Highway 1 off-ramp. After exiting, move to the left lane. After you pass through the tunnel, you will be on Pacific Coast Highway. Continue north about ¾ mile to Dana Point Harbor Drive and turn left. The State Beach entrance will be on your left at the first traffic light. There is a parking fee. Meet in the parking area immediately inside the entrance to the park. Travel time about 45 minutes from Oceanside.

Leader: Doug Nail

760-451-9370

Saturday, March 20, 8:30 a.m.

#### San Jacinto Wildlife Area

Riverside County

**(RC 749-B4) Rating: 2**

From San Diego County take I-15 north to I-215. Exit at the Ramona Expressway right (east). Continue east to Lakeview (a small town) At the stoplight, turn left (north) on Davis Road. Proceed on the asphalt and gravel road for three miles to the SJWA headquarters parking lot on the right. From Escondido allow 75 minutes drive time.

Leader: Sally Sanderson

760-749-6995

Saturday, March 27, 8:30 a.m.

#### Whelan Lake Bird Sanctuary

Oceanside

**(1066-F7) Rating: 2**

From I-15 take Hwy 78 west and exit north on El Camino Real and continue to Douglas Drive. From I-5 exit east on Highway 76 and continue to the Douglas Drive exit. Take Douglas Drive north approximately 1 mile and turn left on North River Road to the entrance gate at the end. Continue west on the dirt road to the caretaker's house and the parking area.

Leader: David Mathis

760-754-5215

Saturday, April 3, 8:30 a.m.

#### Lake Hodges

Del Dios

**(1149-E4) Rating: 2**

From I-15 in Escondido exit at Via Rancho Parkway and drive west to Lake Drive. Turn left and drive about 1/2 mile. Meet at Del Dios Park across from the Country Store. We should see waterfowl, shorebirds and a whole host of local residents.

Leader: Jeff Ebright

858-484-3932

Saturday, April 10, 8:30 a.m.

#### Tijuana Estuary & 7<sup>th</sup> Street

Imperial Beach

**(1349-F1) Rating: 2**

Travel south on I-5 from San Diego and exit west on Coronado Avenue, which becomes Imperial Beach Boulevard. Turn left on 3rd Street to Caspian Way and then right to the Visitor Center parking lot. We'll bird the Estuary and then check for additional species at 7<sup>th</sup> Street on South Bay.

Leader: Jim Beckman

858-792-5526

Saturday, April 17, 8:30 a.m.

#### Old Mission Dam

San Diego

<http://www.mtrp.org/park.asp>

**(1230-F6) Rating: 2**

Take Highway 52 east to the Mast Blvd. exit in Santee. Turn north onto Mast Boulevard and then right at the 1st traffic signal (West Hills Parkway). Take West Hills Parkway to Mission Gorge Road and turn right. Take Mission Gorge Road 0.2 miles and merge right onto Father Junipero Serra Trail. Proceed 0.7 miles down Father Juniper Serra Trail to the Old Mission Dam parking lot, located on the right. This should be prime time for spring migrants.

Leader: Penny Hernandez

760-746-8315

Saturday, April 24, 8:30 a.m.

#### Big Morongo Canyon Preserve

Morongo Valley, San Bernardino County

<http://www.bigmorongo.org/>

**(SB 616-J5) Rating: 1**

From Escondido, proceed north on I-15 for approximately 36 miles to the I-15/I-215 split in Murrieta. Change to I-215 north and continue about 30 miles to Highway 60 east. Take Highway 60 east then continuing east on I-10 to Highway 62, approximately 40 miles. Go north on Highway 62 to Morongo Valley (a small town), about 12

**B**FIELD TRIPS, from Page 4

miles. About a mile or two into town, look for signs for Big Morongo Canyon Preserve. Turn right (south) on East Drive, a dirt road, to the Preserve. The parking lot is just beyond. Picnic tables and restrooms are available. In the caretaker's yard, several hummingbird and seed feeders will attract many birds for your enjoyment. This location is always a spring hot spot and favorite PAS field trip. Bring a lunch for an after birding picnic at the bird feeders. Allow 2 hours travel time from Escondido.

Leader: Doug Nail  
760-451-9370

Saturday, May 1, 8:00 a.m.

**(note Spring/Summer start time)**

**Dairy Mart Pond/Tijuana River Valley**  
San Diego

**(1350 – D5) Rating: 2**

From North County, take the I-15 south and merge with the I-5 south to the Dairy Mart Road Exit. Turn right on Dairy Mart Road (south). Meet just past the concrete bridge next to the large pond on the west side of Dairy Mart Road. We will also caravan a short distance to the TJRV Park Headquarters (public restroom and bird feeders) and then visit the nearby Bird & Butterfly Garden where there is a chance of seeing the elusive Magpie Jay.

Leader: Jim Beckman  
858-792-5526



**SAN DIEGO BIRD FESTIVAL**

For information on the 13<sup>th</sup> annual San Diego Bird Festival (**March 4 through 7, 2010, Marina Village Conference Center in Mission Bay**) go to:

<http://www.sandiegoaudubon.org/birdfest.htm>

SAN DIEGO



**REMINDER:  
DEADLINE FOR THE  
MAY-JUNE ISSUE IS  
APRIL 15<sup>TH</sup>.  
SUBMIT COPY TO  
[arnec@juno.com](mailto:arnec@juno.com)**

**PROGRAMS**

*Please join us for our interesting monthly program and refreshments at the Remington Club, 16916 Hierba Drive, Rancho Bernardo. There is a social period beginning at 7:00 pm with the meeting and program getting under way promptly at 7:30 pm.*

Thursday, March 25

**John Top/Lesley Marples**  
Valleys of Peru

John Top and Lesley Marples returned to Peru in July of 2009 to pursue the rare and beautiful endemics of the Tumbes and Marañon Valley regions of Northern Peru.

They traversed the country from Chiclayo on the Pacific Coast to Tarapoto on the edge of the Amazon Basin and returned through Laymabamba and Cajamarac back to the Pacific Coast at Trujillo, enjoying a journey in search of some of the rarest and most beautiful birds in the world, including the gorgeous Marvelous Spatulateail which you may have seen on the PBS Nature special on Hummingbirds recently.

Another target was the White-winged Guan, a bird that was thought to have been extinct and had not been seen since 1870 until John O'Neill of LSU rediscovered the bird in 1970 in a remote region of the Tumbes wilderness.

Were they successful? Find out for yourself at our March general meeting!

J J J

Thursday, April 22

**Doug Nail**  
"Birding in Your Own Backyard"

This is a presentation made to groups who ask Palomar Audubon to speak to them about how to identify and attract birds. Doug will cover basic bird identification of local San Diego birds, attracting birds and keeping them in your yard by feeding, planting and building for birds. If you know of new birders or folks who just want to have more birds in their own backyard ask them to attend...its free! If you want to have a copy of this presentation to use with folks in your area Doug will be happy to help you.



# OF INTEREST

## CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT HISTORY

Up through the 19th century, many North Americans participated in the tradition of Christmas "side hunts", in which they competed at how many birds they could kill, regardless of whether they had any use for the carcasses and of whether the birds were beneficial, beautiful, or rare. At the end of that century the U.S. ornithologist Frank Chapman, an officer in the recently formed National Audubon Society, proposed counting birds on Christmas instead of killing them.



In 1900, 27 observers took part in the first count in 25 places in the United States and Canada, 15 of them in the northeastern U.S. from Massachusetts to Philadelphia. Since then the counts have been held every winter, usually with increasing numbers of observers. For instance, the 101st count, in the winter of 2000–2001, involved 52,471 people in 1,823 places in 17 countries (but mostly in the U.S. and Canada). The Audubon and the Red Nacional de Observadores de Aves (RNOA,

Society now partners with Bird Studies Canada, the Gulf Coast Bird Observatory of Texas (responsible for CBCs in Mexico), National Network of Bird Observers) and the Instituto Alexander von Humboldt of Colombia.

The greatest number of bird species ever reported by any U.S. location in a single count is 250, observed on December 19, 2005 in the Matagorda County-Mad Island Marsh count circle around Matagorda and Palacios, Texas.

## BIRDING SEAT CANE

Birders are always asking Sharon Kersey about her light-weight folding seat cane, which allows her to SIT while using her binoculars. If you go to Google or Amazon and search for "seat cane," you will be presented with many many choices. Sharon's model is the "Folding Cane Seat" by Sport Seat Intl. - \$23.88 at Amazon. It is aluminum and weighs only 28 oz, so it's very easy to carry or hang on your belt.



**Birding Southeast Arizona August 14-22, 2010**

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Cost is \$700 p/p double occupancy or \$1,000 single (+ \$20 non-PAS member)

Total \_\_\_\_\_

Check # \_\_\_\_\_

Check one:

\_\_\_\_\_ I wish to travel from Poway in the van

\_\_\_\_\_ I am driving to Tucson

\_\_\_\_\_ I am flying. (If this is the case, you will be contacted to arrange flights on the same plane with other fliers)

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## Palomar Audubon Society Chapter-only Membership

Mail your application to:

Palomar Audubon Society  
P. O. Box 2483  
Escondido, CA 92033-2483

Membership in the Palomar Audubon Society includes a subscription to **Band Tales**, Palomar Audubon's bi-monthly newsletter, and an invitation to our monthly programs and weekly field trips.

*New Member* - \$20       *Renewal* - \$20

*New Family Member* - \$25       *Renewal* - \$25

(payable to Palomar Audubon Society)

*Contribution* \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

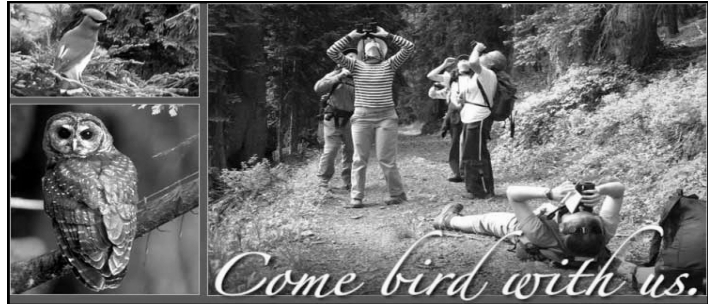
E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

*100% of Chapter Membership dues supports projects locally.*

Please check here if you are interested in National Audubon Society membership.

Please check here if you are a member of National Audubon Society.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Chapter Affiliation)



## OLYMPIC BIRDFEST 2010

*Come Bird With Us.*

Sequim, Washington, April 9-11, 2010

Grab your binoculars and join the Olympic BirdFest 2010 celebration at the Dungeness River Audubon Center, April 9-11, 2010.

The stage is set...quiet bays and estuaries, sandy beaches, a five-mile-long sand spit, and a protected island bird sanctuary on the Strait of Juan de Fuca; wetlands, tide pools, rainforests, and lush river valleys. The players are ready ... Marbled Murrelets, Rhinoceros Auklets, Harlequin Ducks, Black Oystercatchers, Peregrine Falcons, and Pygmy owls will be sporting their finest spring plumage for this celebration. Enjoy guided birding trips, boat tours; and a traditional salmon bake at the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribal Center.

Come bird with us and experience with others the spectacular landscapes of the Olympic Peninsula ...you just might go home with a new bird for your life list! Check out the offerings by going online (<http://www.olympicbirdfest.org>), or calling for a brochure.

**Also this year!** Follow your BirdFest weekend with a three-day, two night birding cruise of the spectacular San Juan Islands on April 11-13, 2010. Visit San Juan and Sucia Islands, and more. Stay at the historic Roche Harbor Resort. Get program information and registration forms online at: <http://www.olympicbirdfest.org>.

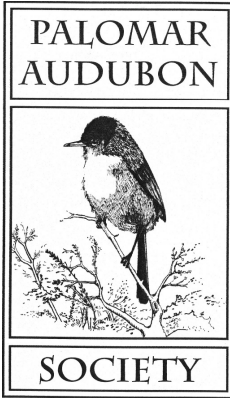
Or contact us by phone, at 360-681-4076,  
E-mail us at [info@olympicbirdfest.org](mailto:info@olympicbirdfest.org) ,  
Or write to us at:

Dungeness River Audubon Center  
P.O. Box 2450  
Sequim, WA 98382

# Band Tales

## March-April, 2010

The *Band Tales* is an official publication of the Palomar Audubon Society; it is issued bi-monthly and sent to all members as a part of their National Audubon Society membership or Palomar Audubon Society Chapter-only membership.



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  - Programs ..... Doug Nail..... 760- 451-9370
  - Publicity ..... Dianne Benham ..... 858-679-7904
  - Scholarship..... Jim Beckman..... 858-792-5526
- Web Page: <http://www.palomaraudubon.org>  
 Webmaster: Kemer Thomson:  
[kemer.thomson@gmail.com](mailto:kemer.thomson@gmail.com)

**Board of Director's Meeting**  
*Thursday, April 1<sup>st</sup> (No meeting in March!!)*  
 7:00 p.m. at the Remington Club  
 16916 Hierba Drive  
 Rancho Bernardo

*Note: All Palomar Audubon Society members are welcome at  
bimonthly Chapter Board meetings.*

**QUICK CALENDAR**

<i>March</i>	<b>6</b>	San Diego Bird Festival – No Field Trip
<i>March</i>	<b>13</b>	Doheny State Beach Park Walk
<i>March</i>	<b>20</b>	San Jacinto Wildlife Area Walk
<i>March</i>	<b>25</b>	General Meeting: Valleys of Peru
<i>March</i>	<b>27</b>	Whelan Lake Bird Sanctuary Walk
<i>April</i>	<b>1</b>	Board of Director's Meeting
<i>April</i>	<b>3</b>	Lake Hodges Walk
<i>April</i>	<b>10</b>	Tijuana Estuary & 7 <sup>th</sup> Street Walk
<i>April</i>	<b>17</b>	Old Mission Dam Walk
<i>April</i>	<b>22</b>	General Meeting: Birding in Your Own Backyard
<i>April</i>	<b>24</b>	Big Morongo Canyon Preserve Walk
<i>May</i>	<b>1</b>	Dairy Mart Pond/Tijuana River Valley Walk